

Draft

**Union Township Environmental Commission
Minutes of the June 10, 2008 Regular Meeting**

The June 10, 2008 Regular Meeting of the Union Township Environmental Commission was called to order at 7:12 PM.

The notice of meeting as published in the Hunterdon County Democrat and the Courier-News satisfied the requirements of the Open Public Meeting Act, and was also posted in the Municipal Building, on the Union Township website and filed with the Municipal Clerk.

I. Roll call:

Present: Bill Harclerode, Stephen Hurford, Michele McBride, Kathleen Corcoran, Chuck Neary
Absent: Bob Beylickjian, Sandy Stiger, John Wingler
Public: Mike Romanek

II. Approval of Minutes:

Mr. Hurford made a motion to approve the minutes. Michele McBride seconded the motion. All approved.

III. Chairmans Report:

1. Mr. Harclerode stated that he had received a telephone call from Gail Cookson regarding an "adopt a road" program for the Township. She cannot officially be on a municipal board; however she is interested in participating. Mrs. Corcoran stated that she would follow up with Ms. Cookson.
2. Mr. Harclerode stated that he's received a call from a resident regarding a recycling tax imposed recently. He will respond to the resident, and will maintain communication with Matt Severino, who is the Township Committee representative in charge of recycling in the Township.
3. Mr. Harclerode stated that he has been nominated to be Chairman of UTEC for a one year term. He recommended nomination of Michele McBride as Vice Chairperson. All agreed that Ms. McBride should be Vice Chairperson and congratulated Ms. McBride.
4. Mr. Harclerode stated that Chuck Neary has also been appointed as a member to the Environmental Commission.
5. There was some discussion regarding whether we should have an August meeting. Mrs. Corcoran made a motion to cancel the August meeting. Ms. McBride seconded and all agreed.

IV. Committee Reports:

Open Space Committee:

1. The open space plan should be rewritten, but we are waiting until the Highlands Plan is finalized. This is currently on hold.

Equestrian Trails:

1. Mr. Hurford stated that he has seen minutes of the Twp. Council meeting and the Trail Association has gone before the Twp. requesting equestrian "potential crossing" signs.
2. Mr. Hurford stated that he believes that they do not want the equestrian trails maps to be made public, especially for trails on private property.

Property Stewardship:

1. Ms. McBride stated that the Hoffman Park property demolition project is moving along well. Contractor will begin tunnel demolition work the week of June 22, 2008 and will be completed by the end of July 2008. They are awaiting the Historical Society representative to finish her assessment of the basement area before they move forward with the work. Ms. McBride has

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a subcommittee of 8 people reporting back on their specific duties regarding the project. The low bid came in significantly lower than what was originally expected. Once the major work is completed, Ms. McBride anticipates a UTEC “clean up” day to get the facility ready for marketing.

2. Regarding Douglas farm, Paige DiRoberto is researching the farmland preservation programs available. Brian Kirkpatrick will be meeting with the group regarding the green acres program and opportunities available, although there is not a lot of funding available currently.
3. Regarding Milligan Farm, there are two ideas being investigated. There is a potential to utilize the house for a COAH group home, which Pat Dziubek is looking into. The other potential is something that Skip Jonas is looking into involving reforesting a portion of the property. He is working on a proposal through Rutgers University involving agencies such as the NJ Conservation Foundation. Once completed, he will bring this before the Township representatives.

Planning Board:

1. Ms. Corcoran stated that Republic Services, Raritan Valley Disposal is looking to install their own fueling station on their property.
2. The P.S. Construction resolution was memorialized subject to positive laboratory tests regarding the dumping areas on site.
3. Ms. Corcoran stated that the COAH proposal is moving forward with an RFP.

Public:

1. Mr. Romanek expressed an interest in renting the Hoffman Park barn area near his home. The barn could potentially be utilized as a boy scout meeting place in the future, or other community activities. He has a farmer friend that offered to clear the land if he can park his tractor in there. He has watched the building deteriorate and rot and he would like to participate in cleaning it up. Michele McBride stated that she is working on investigating the legality of these proposals.
2. Mr. Romanek has also expressed an interest in recycling efforts in the town.
3. Mr. Romanek suggested that the Township could potentially rent out some of our open space properties as picnic areas. There was some discussion regarding potential fund raising opportunities in Township open spaces.

Road Noise:

1. Mrs. Corcoran attended the Hunterdon County Roundtable meeting on May 21 during which they discussed road noise and the “Scenic Byway” Designation currently proposed for Rt. 78 by the Borough of Lebanon and other Rt. 78 municipalities. Lebanon is taking the lead, and we could attend the meetings if we would like to be involved in the early process. “Scenic byway” is an NJDOT designation. Ms. McBride stated that a member of the Historical Society has been requested to join the “scenic byway” committee.
2. Mr. Harclerode made a presentation regarding unmuffled engine braking and the current laws in effect against it. This presentation was also presented by Amy Switlyk at the Hunterdon County Roundtable meeting. NJDEP is responsible for all noise laws in NJ; however, they have not adopted any federal laws for the interstate highways.
3. There will be a letter sent to all Mayors to municipalities on Rt. 78 and Rt. 31 requesting endorsement of **statewide resolution** regarding unmuffled engine braking. “Dear Mayor” letters will be sent out at the end of this month requesting adoption at town council meetings. The goal is a \$500 fine for unmuffled engine braking. Mrs. Corcoran made a motion to move forward with this. Motion made by Ms. Corcoran, and seconded by Mr. Hurford, and all approved.
4. The Rt. 78 paving is **on schedule to be re-paved** with new low noise asphalt, beginning in July or August of 2008 (between exits 10 and 18).

Train Noise:

1. No progress was reported.

- V. **Communication and Education:** Ms. McBride, Mr. Harclerode and Ms. Altomari had a tour of the major Sidney Brook Study problem areas. There were some dumping issues as well. Most of the issues were stormwater erosion related.
- VI. **Adjournment:**
The Chairman asked for a motion to adjourn. It was moved by Mr. Hurford, seconded by Mrs. Corcoran, and approved by a 4-0 vote.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kathleen Corcoran, Secretary